

ABSTRACT

Internet Relay Chat is provided for mobile devices (e.g., mobile telephones) using an IRC proxy approach. The mobile chat proxy server facilitates 2-way text conversations between users of cell phones, 5 web browser users, and/or other chat group users, e.g., Instant Messaging service users. In the IRC proxy approach, SMPP and/or Interworking Function (IWF) interfaces are used to provide Internet Relay Chat functionality to mobile handsets. IRC proxy is provided by a mobile chat proxy server, also referred to as a "mobile originated chat server" or 10 "chat server", and/or under its trademark name of a "MOChat™ proxy server". The mobile chat proxy server exchanges message objects with a wireless Internet gateway. The mobile chat proxy server uses standard IRC protocol in communications with the standard or conventional IRC server supporting the relevant chat group. The mobile chat proxy server 15 maintains a real-time proxy connection to the conventional IRC server for each mobile device. In operation, the mobile chat proxy server interprets chat messages from mobile devices, and determines if and how they should be forwarded to the conventional IRC server. The mobile chat proxy server utilizes an RMI interface between the mobile chat proxy 20 server and the wireless Internet gateway for sending messages to chat group participants using mobile handsets. The mobile chat proxy server is therefore able to receive chat group messages from the mobile handset, interpret them in the IRC context, and send appropriate standardized IRC commands to the conventional IRC server. The mobile 25 chat proxy server may provide mobile enhancements to standard IRC commands, such as notification and/or summons commands. The mobile chat proxy server allows mobile users to be in multiple chat groups simultaneously. A short messaging system controller (SMSC) forwards a mobile originated message to the mobile chat proxy server. The mobile 30 chat proxy server conducts user validation, and configures user options.

An IRC software module in the mobile user handset allows mobile users to participate in chat sessions. After validating the mobile user, the mobile chat proxy server will forward all IRC traffic from the mobile user to the conventional IRC server, after examination of all IRC commands for the

5 mobile specific implementation.

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